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GEM champions excellence in heritage learning

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Case Studies

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What is GEM?

Editorial

GEM champions excellence in heritage learning to improve the education, health and wellbeing of the general public.

GEM believes that involvement with our rich and diverse heritage is an enriching and transformational experience that provides distinctive opportunities for learning. We aim to make that learning accessible, relevant and enjoyable for all. GEM works with its members and collaboratively with other learning organisations across the UK and internationally to:

- champion excellence in heritage learning and participation enabling people to be inspired by, value and enjoy their and other's heritage;
- advocate the power of heritage learning in transforming people's lives to sector organisations, national agencies, funders and government;
- influence sector organisations to deliver excellent learning and participation for their visitors;
- promote and explain the benefits of learning through heritage which is inclusive, sustainable and respectful of communities;
- develop creative partnerships with other organisations to share effective practice in heritage learning and participation;
- research and pioneer innovation in heritage learning and participation;
- inspire and support the work of heritage learning practitioners;
- provide opportunities for practitioners to develop their practice through networking, mentoring and learning together.

I hope you are eagerly looking forward to reading volume 18 of GEM *Case Studies* with articles focusing on a variety of topics and audiences. Authors may look to see how their case study looks in print, and others may skim through to see what has been happening in heritage organisations across the UK. Sadly, some of us may put this edition to one side, quietly promising to read it when we have a moment – a moment that may never come.

Those readers who are professional heritage educators, or aspire to be one, will most likely devour these pages in order to improve their best professional practice. The ability to reflect on one's own practice, and to improve it, is a mark of a true professional.

If you are keeping a reflective journal and have an action plan for your own continuous professional development (CPD) you will know what I'm talking about. You will know how important it is to read and reflect, and that a note of your reflections can be made in your journal and any resulting actions put in your CPD plan. Everyone who participates in one of our foundation courses learns how to keep a reflective journal, and a CPD action plan and log.

Those GEM members wishing to become professional members of GEM may already be keeping a reflective journal as we have announced that one element of becoming a GEM professional member is to keep a reflective journal. Guidance on how to become a professional member will be available in the new year.

The big news since the last edition is that thanks to a £168,000 resilience grant from Arts Council England (ACE), GEM is setting up a new permanent *Learning and Sharing Centre* for all those in the cultural sector that are involved in education.

With our partners we will build upon existing best practice to provide training and CPD at all levels, and we will encourage the workforce to network, and share experiences, skills and knowledge. There will be new online resources and an online "signpost" so you can find relevant training opportunities.

I am certain that GEM's *Learning and Sharing Centre* will meet the needs of today's workforce and help to ensure that GEM has a sustainable future.

The GEM trustees are pleased to congratulate Katrina Siliprandi on becoming the first recipient of GEM's new Lifetime Achievement Award to retired members of GEM for services to museum education and/or GEM itself. Details of her achievements are listed in this edition.

Enjoy reading *Case Studies*, but also reflect on its contents. Perhaps it will inspire you to write an article for the next edition?

John Stevenson

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Making a Mark in the Tees Valley
Anna Husband
Heritage Learning Consultant



Making a Mark in the Tees Valley

Online resources for schools

Summary

The National Portrait Gallery (NPG) and museums across the Tees Valley have developed *Making a Mark in the Tees Valley*, an online learning resource for schools exploring personal and local identity through museum collections.

Background

For the past four years, the NPG has been working with eight museums in the Tees Valley, as part of the Arts Council England (ACE) funded *Museum and Schools* programme. The key aim of this partnership is to connect local children and students with their heritage, helping them to develop a sense of place and identity, and in so doing raise their aspirations.

The history of the Tees Valley encompasses industry and innovation, creativity and design, and exploration. Collectively, the partner museums offer fascinating insights into the people and stories that shaped this remarkable region and its impact on Britain and the wider world. We created the idea of *Making a Mark* –

exploring personal and local identity through people's stories – as a focus.

During its first three years, the partnership created a cohesive learning programme for schools with sessions in each of the regional museums. Nationally significant portraits with local resonance were loaned by the NPG to the Tees Valley museums for a series of locally focused exhibitions.

Challenge

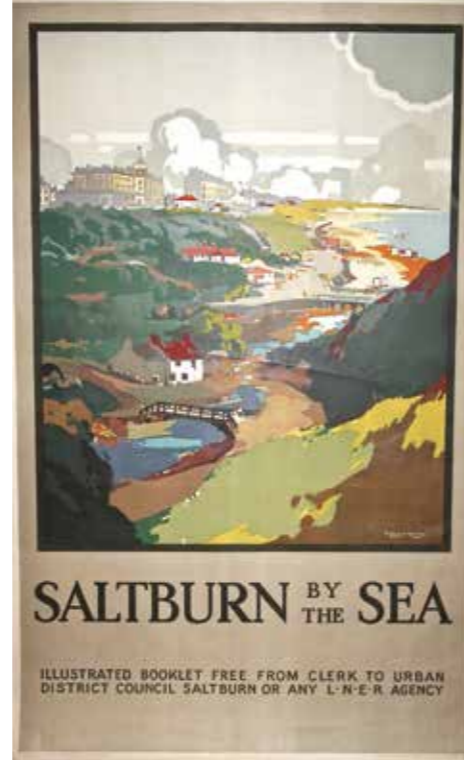
We recognised that high quality museum learning for schools begins and ends in the classroom, and that teachers need support to maximise learning opportunities and take visits beyond an isolated "day out".

Approach

With the *Museums and Schools* initiative in its final year and the funding reaching an end, the approach needed to be sustainable, low maintenance and easily accessible for teachers. We decided to create an online resource and to consult local teachers about which content to include and how it should

be organised. We worked with Inspire2Learn – a teaching and learning centre funded by local schools – to recruit teachers for the consultation from their existing networks and to help launch and publicise the resource.





Intended outcomes

- Teachers more likely and better able to use examples from local heritage to bring their curriculum topics to life.
- Wider reach of partner collections.
- A “joined up” offer for schools supporting local heritage learning through museum visits and in the classroom.

Intended outputs

A set of online resources for teachers:

- Where partner collections combine to reveal a rich and holistic story of the Tees Valley.
- Which places local collections and stories in a national context, extending reach for all partners.
- Which supports curriculum-linked learning about personal and local identity.

Obstacles and issues

The NPG, as a national institution, holds a comprehensive and extensively digitised collection. However, many of the partner museums do not have access to this kind of resource. This

coupled with ensuring all partner collections were equally represented, while delivering curriculum-relevant content, were key challenges.

Actual outcomes

With some creative thinking, we were able to meet our aims of providing unique content representative of each partner, telling a holistic story of the Tees Valley while ensuring genuine relevance for local teachers. Whilst too early for feedback from teachers Andrew Stogdale from Inspire2Learn says, “Feedback has been really enthusiastic with teachers appreciating a sneaky peek into what they might see for real when they visit their local museum. There is just enough additional information to spark the questions that are at the heart of effective history teaching and bring our local history to life in the classroom.”

Actual outputs

Collectively, partners provided an array of digitised images including objects, paintings, photographs,

portraits and manuscripts. These were organised into themes steered by the teacher consultation and presented as a set of “image galleries”.

Themes are locally-focused, curriculum-relevant and range from early settlers and exploration, to the seaside and first world war. Here an astronaut sits comfortably next to a designer, Captain Cook and a Saxon princess, while ordinary men, women and children mine millions of tons of ironstone, build the Sydney Harbour Bridge and journey on the world’s first public railway.

Concise, audience-relevant information about each theme and image, coupled with ideas for classroom activities, a series of fascinating “Did you know?” facts and links to further online material bring the themes to life.

Lessons learned

Teachers’ requirements from museum-based online resources are relatively modest – and needn’t cost the earth.

What they really need is:

- A quick route to your best stuff – a “greatest hits” of good quality images (and video clips if you have them) from your collection that they can print, project onto a whiteboard or repurpose in a presentation or tablet app.
- Access to your knowledge through concise, audience-focused text (or video if you have the budget) – the teachers we consulted particularly liked the inclusion of “Did you know?” facts as a way of “hooking” their students into deeper content.
- Simple classroom activities – teachers wanted flexible, workable, ideas, pointers and starters (as opposed to detailed lesson plans) organised by key stage.

Working across a local/regional partnership of nine museums and galleries is an effective way of producing a resource of a quality and range that will genuinely engage teachers. However, consideration must be given to the significant amount of

time and co-ordination needed for a collaborative project such as this.

Working with a local partner with existing teacher networks proved very effective in gaining support and interest from schools. Feedback from our successful launch event at Inspire2Learn showed teachers not only welcoming the resource to help prepare for and follow up museum visits in their classrooms, and really make the most of museum collections, but asking whether the resource could be extended to include even more objects and images.

Next steps

The partners will continue to evaluate use of the resource via Google Analytics and anecdotal evidence from visiting teachers. The Tees Valley museums will work with Inspire2Learn to deliver teacher continuing professional development for using the resource and to explore possibilities to work together to extend the resource further.

Anna Husband
 Heritage learning consultant



Further information

The Tees Valley museums comprise Kirkleatham Museum, Cleveland Ironstone Mining Museum, Dorman Museum, Captain Cook Birthplace Museum, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Preston Park Museum, Head of Steam – Darlington Railway Museum, and the Hartlepool Museum and Art Gallery. The NPG are the national partner.

View the resources:
www.npg.org.uk/MaMTeesValley

Tell us what you think:
 #MaMTeesValley

Useful links

Evaluation of Extending Digital Practice programme – Flow UK and Artswork

www.artswork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/artswork-extending-innovative-practice-background-digital-report-new-....pdf

Stronger Together, digital strand evaluation by Flow:

www.langleyacademy.org/strongertogether/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/stronger-together-digital-research-flow-associates-mar-20151.pdf

Culture 24 Let’s Get Real: connecting collections to young audiences

www.weareculture24.org.uk/projects/action-research/

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Hastings Pier Digital Memory

Summary

In 2010 Hastings Pier suffered a devastating fire. Thanks to public campaigning and significant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funding bodies, Hastings Pier underwent a £14.2 million restoration project and was re-opened in May 2016.

Background

A learning and education department was set up in 2013 to deliver an activity plan and a £400,000 interpretation scheme. The interpretation scheme was rejected, rewritten, resubmitted and approved in October 2015 – giving just over six months for delivery before the pier's re-opening date of May 2016.

Challenge

We encountered three main challenges in delivering this project; one was a short delivery time, related to this was limited staff capacity and the other was an inconsistent archive (we would be presenting the archive that had been amassed from public contributions over the past two years).

Approach

Working with Kiss the Frog, based in the Netherlands, we came up with the concept of presenting the archive material in a randomised way – through a digital roulette wheel on multi-touch tables (software cost totalled £40,000).

Photography by Jim Stephenson
www.clickclickjim.com



Intended outcomes

To create an online archive that was free for public use both on-site and online, thus encouraging the public to engage with the heritage of Hastings Pier and to feel encouraged to add to the archive with historical or contemporary materials.

Intended outputs

- Multi touch tables (three).
- Research kiosks (two).
- Volunteer station.
- An online archive.
- A topsy turvy periscope.
- Trails (two).
- Pier Head cut outs.
- Fixed binoculars (two).
- Dance steps installation.
- An animation film for children (plus new projection system).
- A re-configurable changeable display system and display.

Obstacles and issues

One of the issues with the archive was that as it was created as a response to what people donated, we were reliant on whatever material was given to us. This meant that we ended up with lots of postcards of large waves crashing on the seafront, but hardly any pictures of the ballroom in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The dearth of photographs from gigs was frustrating as most of the oral histories we recorded were about seeing bands such as The Kinks, The Who, and Jimi Hendrix. At that time, photography was not ubiquitous and as such few people took or kept photos of



themselves or their friends at gigs. The mismatch between stories of interest and archival material to back it up, gave us the dilemma of how to tell the stories of the pier's past with an inconsistent archive – we did not want to highlight the gaps.

Actual outcomes

Since May 2016, 308,000 people have visited the pier: 8,500 people remotely engaged with the archive online in the first six weeks: <http://digital-memory.hpcharity.co.uk>

We have a backlog of over 1,000 items still to add to the archive, and over 100 new items have been donated by the public.

Actual outputs

We did manage to achieve all of the outputs that we signed up to deliver, but there are areas that need improvement. For example, we have found that older visitors tend to be more hesitant with the multi-touch tables so we have ordered simple signage with instructions and trained a team of heritage interpretation volunteers who help visitors engage with the interpretation.

Lessons learned

- Decent coffee ... and the value of volunteers. This project would not have been delivered if it were not for the dedication of four committed archive volunteers – Kevin, Rowena, Roy and Olivia.

- Kissing Frogs ... or working with the experts.
- Always be prepared ... to be flexible!
- Positive partnerships. Thanks to Hastings Museum, Hastings Library, Judges postcards and The Keep for letting us use their materials free of charge.

I am also grateful to Designmap, Kiss the Frog, Community Sites, and Marcon for helping us achieve our aims.

Next steps

We are undergoing a period of review now, and within the ongoing restrictions of time and money, we are using observations and feedback to make refinements. We have just delivered archive events for Heritage Open Days, we are about to undergo further training with Community Sites to create packages of featured content, and we are planning to make the link between our schools' programmes and the Digital Memory next year.

Beatrice Rapley
Learning & education manager,
Hastings Pier Charity

Heritage
Interpretation
(digital)



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Fuzzy Duck (animation) – Matt Geeling
www.fuzzyduck.eu/what-we-do/

Marcon (fit out) – Alan Stewart
www.marconfitout.com/projects/

DJ Willrich (AV) – Nicola Jagger
www.djwillrich.com

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Our Stories: Culloden, Jacobites and flash fiction

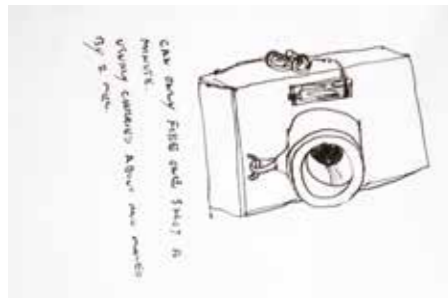
Summary

Our Stories was a collaborative project between Culloden Battlefield and Visitor Centre and Adult Learning at Highlife Highland. A small group of adult learners through the medium of flash fiction, poetry and song engaged with the stories of the Battle of Culloden.

Background

The project was aimed at adult literacies learners who live in and around the area of Inverness and were aged 16+. *Our Stories* focused on inspiring learners to engage critically with Culloden, the aftermath of conflict and current politics, and the relevance of past and current events to their lives and the communities around them.

During the project the learners worked with National Trust for Scotland Culloden Battlefield



and Visitor Centre's learning team; tutors from Adult Learning Services, Highlife Highland; and Grace Banks a Scottish author.

The project was funded through Scottish Book Trust's Live Literature funding.

Challenge

This is a pilot project which sought to develop partnerships with the Adult Learning Team at Highlife Highland.

This also provided the team at Culloden with an opportunity to engage an area of the local community which did not come to the centre or engage with any of our other community and learning projects.

Approach

The learners took part in six sessions at Culloden Battlefield. The first session was led by Culloden's learning team with the remaining five sessions led by Grace Banks and aided by Culloden's learning team and tutors from Adult Learning.

The learners started with an introduction to the history of the battle and the collections, in following weeks they built upon their understanding and developed poems, flash fiction and composed a song about the battle.

Intended outcomes

- Developing partnership work with Highlife Highland.
- Breaking down perceived barriers between Culloden Battlefield and Visitor Centre and residents from areas of multiple deprivations.
- Building the participants skills in enquiry and expressing thoughts and opinions.

Intended outputs

Publication of the work in a pop up banner which will tour the libraries and other local authority centres in the Highland region. It was intended that there was a soft launch of the work so we could display it to the wider community.

Obstacles and issues

- We had one member of the project drop out (20% of the total group size), which was to a certain extent expected by the adult learning team at Highlife Highland. This was not so much a worry but rather something we had to bear in mind throughout the project.
- The learners had very little knowledge of the history and the exhibition can be overwhelming. We have a very academic gallery, which at the beginning put some of the learner's off. We dealt with this by putting an emphasis on talking through the history rather than reading the history.



Actual outcomes

- Developing partnership work with Highlife Highland – the partnership with the adult learning team worked really well and we are looking at further project work.
- Breaking down perceived barriers between Culloden and residents from areas of multiple deprivations. The participants have now been to the centre several times with the project to show their family and friends the site and talk about the history. They have also gone to local heritage centres and libraries where their work has been on tour.
- Building the participants skills in enquiry and expressing thoughts and opinions. The participants really engaged with the site and developed a strong interest in the Jacobite Uprising of 1745. The work they produced was insightful and thought provoking and visitors to the site have engaged with the work.

Actual outputs

- The plan was to produce a pop up banner which could tour libraries and community centres throughout the Highlands. This has gone exceedingly well with a five-month tour planned around sites in the Highlands.
- The flash fiction, poems and an unexpected song were compiled and made into a book for the participants. This book was published and a copy given to each of the participants, the author and a copy is held at Culloden and the Adult Learning library.

Lessons learned

- The level of support for the learners was higher than anticipated, more akin to support for young people. There was a large amount of working with different and sometimes opposing personalities.
- There was also lessons learned at a practical level, the task of copywriting and editing the book took longer than expected. The pieces of work were directly copied to preserve the learners' work. This threw up a few issues when what a learner thought they wrote wasn't what was on the page. Simple things like writing "I am" when the learner meant "I was". This in part was the difference in their spoken and written skills. There was a stage which was missed. With

hindsight we should have had a small break, and then a meeting where the learners came back and re read their work.

Next steps

The project has now concluded. There are a few changes to the final publication and we are looking forward to working with the adult learning team in the future. This was hopefully the first of many projects yet to come!

Catriona McIntosh
Head education guide

Further information

For more information on the project please contact culloden@nts.org.uk
Project coordinator, learning team, Culloden Battlefield and Visitor Centre and Roisin Irvine, adult learning coordinator, Highlife Highland



Re-collection

An art group for people affected by dementia

Summary

In summer 2016, the Holburne Museum, No.1 Royal Crescent and Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership National Health Service Trust (AWP) ran a creative art group for people experiencing memory problems and their carers. Each week, they visited part of the collections (six sessions at the Holburne then six at No.1 Royal Crescent), created art work in response and enjoyed refreshments together. The sessions were developed and led by artist Paula Tew and arts psychotherapist Rose Pickett (AWP), supported by museum staff and volunteers.

Background

The project originated with artists Paula Tew and Gillian McFarland, and Rose Pickett (AWP) – and their mutual interest in exploring creative, therapeutic activities in non-clinical settings. An initial project at the Holburne (2014) was followed by a three-venue trial (2015); the 2016 work built on previous experience and was funded by a private donation to the Holburne.



Both museums had worked together in 2014 on community engagement projects funded by Arts Council England.

Challenge

The isolation felt by people with early onset dementia – and their carers.

Approach

- Working with the health service to identify appropriate participants.
- Working across two museums to enhance the experience.
- Aiming to equally benefit people with dementia and their carers.
- Creativity as a way of relieving stress and facilitating communication.

Intended outcomes

- To provide a relaxed, non-clinical setting where people were not defined by their dementia or role as carers.
- Participants would enjoy visiting beautiful, inspiring museums.
- Participants would enjoy learning, or re-learning, new skills.

Intended outputs

To develop a model for sustainable partnership working.

Obstacles and issues

- Participants joining at different stages impacted on group dynamics. It was essential to be flexible and change plans.
- Some participants' health deteriorated throughout the course of the project.
- Staff, freelancers and volunteers needed to respect patient privacy and confidentiality.
- Volunteers or staff members needed to be aware of the varied levels of cognitive ability within the group when doing gallery tours.
- Some art activities were difficult for some participants and needed to be reviewed.
- As the weeks progressed, more people wanted to join than we could accommodate.
- No parking was available at one venue; this could be stressful or lead to non-participation.
- A better means of gathering accurate and useful participants' feedback is required.



Actual outcomes

- The non-clinical settings led to decreased stress-levels, focusing on what people can still do and providing opportunities to create positive memories.
- The non-clinical settings and session format facilitated conversations with the health professional.
- Respite for carers.
- Some participants used skills they had learnt to make things at home or to teach others.
- Reduced risk of social isolation; some participants established friendships that have been maintained outside the group.
- Some participants returned to the

museums in their own time.

- One museum volunteer became an advocate for the value of this work to other interested volunteers.
- Through Polly Andrews (No.1 Royal Crescent), the Alzheimer's Society became involved and referred people to the group.

Actual outputs

If adapted in response to the lessons learned, the project will have provided the desired model for future projects.

"Through partnership working we are able to creatively combine our specialist skills and tailor what we offer to people living with a dementia".
Rose Pickett, AWP.



Next steps

There is still enough funding for another 12 week project block in autumn 2016 but the challenge is to secure future funding, without creating a totally new project, so that the group is sustainable.

Christina Parker
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Express yourself

The power of object learning in pupils with SEND

Summary

Specialist Leaders in Cultural Education (SLiCE) was funded by CapeUK through Arts Council England (ACE). Leeds Museums and Galleries (LMG) were paired with West Oaks Specialist School (WOS) for an action research programme to evidence whether an arts intervention could improve literacy standards in pupils. It was delivered over the academic year 2015/16.

Background

LMG is the largest local authority-run museum service in England and

consists of nine sites which represent the history of Leeds.

WOS educates 250 pupils across three sites in Leeds; all pupils have an education health and care plan or statement of special educational need.

Two classes from ages 11 to 14 and 14 to 16 were selected to "buddy up" and take part in art sessions with LMG. Data was captured through the school's standardised BSquared assessment tool and structured observations made by LMG staff.

Challenge

WOS wanted to find an alternative way that would enable pupils with complex needs and limited language skills the ability to express their

thoughts, opinions and understanding within their learning.

An enquiry question was set to focus the action research: "How can collaborative work between West Oaks School and Leeds Museums and Galleries impact on expressive communication in pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?"

Approach

Action research: Plan – Act – Observe – Reflect

The programme was a mixture of visits to Leeds Museums and outreach into school. We enhanced this with artist-led workshops and visits to other arts organisations. One day a week was dedicated to this and the sessions followed the same format for consistency and familiarity within the school day.

We used object handling to inspire pupils' creativity, encouraging them to ask questions, lead their own learning and spark connections to our collections. This was followed with linked practical art activities, exploring a range of art forms and differentiated for their needs. We accompanied sessions with stories or music and this multi-sensory approach was particularly valuable.

Intended outcomes

- To understand whether pupils could express themselves with greater confidence and fluency (verbally and non-verbally) through the arts.
- To discover whether the arts could raise standards in the curriculum, either meeting or exceeding expected levels of progress.

Intended outputs

- Gain an Explore or Bronze Arts Award for each pupil.
- Submit a final report to CapeUK for ACE.

Obstacles and issues

The group contained a high proportion of pupils with autism spectrum condition which meant that they preferred to work in isolation.

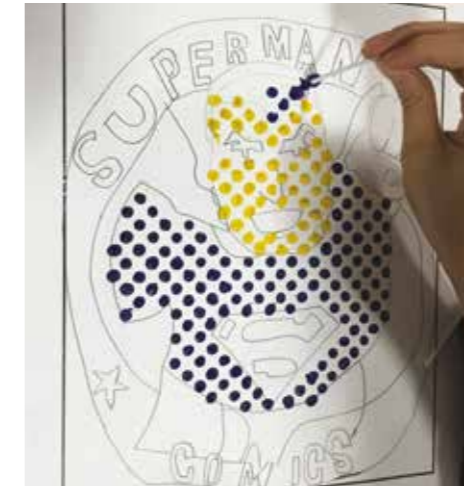
The observational evidence witnessed by LMG staff would have been more robust had we reflected jointly with the teacher. We chose to invest time we did have to be fully focused on the pupils, because of this we were also unable to develop consistently as a partnership.

Actual outcomes

The pupils' BSquared results in expressive communication showed a trend in exceeding expected levels of progress. On average the focus pupils achieved 69% above their expected attainment.

This shows a significant impact on improving learning and progress in this area and LMG's observations provided holistic supporting evidence.

As the programme developed the pupils' enthusiasm and anticipation grew. Their improved confidence and expression verbally and through their art was noted by all teaching staff. There was an increase in the pupils' willingness to collaborate both socially and artistically that had not been witnessed before. Some instances were incredibly moving and powerful and we were only able to evidence this through the shared experience.



Actual outputs

Aside from the intended outputs, LMG have delivered workshops on the learning involved at conferences for the British Museum and Brighton University. There have been wider impacts on our service and future developments in terms of SEND staff training and delivery.

Lessons learned

Building in the time to get to know SEND pupils is not always possible but it was crucial to our successes. Having been forewarned that the pupils' attentions spans could be short we initially over-planned our sessions. We soon realised the benefits of slowing down, allowing time to linger, discuss, photograph and interact with each other through our objects. This led to some amazing stories, interpretations, personal anecdotes and inspiring creative artworks.

Next steps

West Oaks will become a partner school to Leeds Museums and Galleries which will keep conversations and projects taking place in the future. The teacher lead has also been reappointed in a new role in school as their arts and culture coordinator.

**Dionne Matthews Spence
and Sarah Allen**
Learning and access officers,
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Further information

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museumsandgalleries

Balancing business with pleasure



Summary

Both the formal learning programme and the family engagement programme at Tullie House have enjoyment and inspiration at their heart, but are now taking on an increasingly important income generation role at the museum.

Background

The Tullie House primary schools programme is one of the biggest in the county, and welcomes over 12,000 pupils every year, mainly through facilitated on-site workshops. In 2015 the museum won the national Telegraph & Kids in Museums Family Friendly Award, and runs regular

activities for families throughout the year.

Challenge

We needed to find ways to increase income generated from the schools and family programme without compromising quality, reducing numbers or, most importantly, creating barriers to access for our local residents.

Approach

We aimed to come up with creative ways to increase income without causing a subsequent decline in participation numbers through analysing our audiences, linking the programmes with temporary exhibitions and investing in staff and resources.



Intended outcomes

A schools and family learning programme that combined high participation with income generation for the museum.

Intended outputs

An increase in income from facilitated schools workshops, family learning donations and ticketed events.

Obstacles and issues

Balancing financial targets with the needs of our audiences was a delicate tightrope to walk! As an Arts Council England funded Major Partner Museum, we have a responsibility to provide access to great art and culture for all, without economic barriers. We had to look carefully at our offer in its entirety to ensure we mixed free activity with paid activity.

For the schools programme, we felt pressure to keep our prices low in response to rising travel costs but were also conscious about not undervaluing our product.

Actual outcomes

Schools: 2015/16 was our best year ever for income generation and numbers, with income generated from lessons and our user group scheme increasing.

Families: 2015/16 saw our highest participation rates in family activity and our highest level of donations to the programme. The summer of 2016 was a good platform for us to trial higher

ticket priced events, and a bespoke exhibition offer for families.

Actual outputs

Schools: to achieve this increase in income generation we –

- 1) Speculated to accumulate – we pay the casual staff who deliver our schools sessions a good hourly rate. This means we retain staff and ensure our investment in their training is repaid, and we also attract high quality applicants – all of our casual staff are ex-teachers and their skill, enthusiasm and knowledge is a key reason behind the success of our programme.
- 2) User group – we offer schools the opportunity to pay an annual subscription in exchange for a discount on sessions. In 2015/16 we stepped up our marketing of the scheme through printed and electronic communication and saw an increase in members.
- 3) Packages – in 2015/16 we piloted a *Mini Museums* project where we created a package of activity for schools to take part in over a half-term, with each pupil achieving a Discover Arts Award and classes creating museums in their settings. The pilot was very successful and, working with teachers, we've packaged this up and will be charging for it this year.

Families:

- 1) Donations – we invested in an interactive donations box and put up clear signage giving families guidelines for suggested donations. We also asked our delivery staff and volunteers to highlight this, without making families feel like it was a mandatory charge. This resulted in over a 1,000% increase in donations from 2014/15!
- 2) Higher priced events – alongside our free summer holiday drop ins, we put on ticketed events including our first ever family sleepover. Inspired by our temporary exhibition exploring the world of Cressida Cowell's *How to Train Your Dragon* books, 40 participants took part in activities, behind the scenes tours, object handling and a film screening. We charged £30 per child and £15 per adult and the feedback was excellent – many parents told us they would have paid more! We will be running family sleepovers linked to exhibitions again due to the high profit margin of this type of event.
- 3) Soft play – in the spring we trialled a children's interactive play gallery inspired by our collections, which included soft play equipment like giant building blocks, a slide and a ball pool. This was incredibly popular and using soft play encouraged new families who wouldn't necessarily have felt a museum was "for them" to visit.

Lessons learned

- Don't be too cheap! Some of our family events this summer were priced too low, and feedback showed we need to have more confidence in the quality of our offer.
- Ensure that you communicate the offer clearly to front of house, explaining the content of events in detail so they can sell tickets more confidently.
- Be honest with teachers about your need to generate income – profit is not a dirty word!

Next steps

Due to the success of our family activities over the summer we will be investigating funding streams for a permanent interactive children's gallery in the museum. We will also be programming ticketed events alongside free activity in every school holiday going forward. Due to capacity issues, we will be offering charged outreach sessions to schools in order to increase income without being limited by space.

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Becoming Makaton and autism friendly

Summary

Culzean Castle and Country Park has been developing its Makaton provision since summer 2015. We have also been developing our provision for people with autism.

Background

Culzean welcomes a large number of school groups through its ranger and castle activities. It attracts a wide variety of audiences including a high number of families. One main barrier is its location: situated four miles from the nearest train station and a 20-minute walk from the closest bus stop. We aim to reduce barriers (physical, social and cultural).



Makaton is part of a strategy to reduce barriers for audiences with communication difficulties and on the autism spectrum, whether visiting us as part of school groups or as a family or individual.

Challenge

Although we provide for ASN (additional support needs) groups in our formal learning programme, much more can be done within our informal provision. By seeking and developing training opportunities for staff and by raising awareness the aim is to build confidence and skills to work with this specific audience.

Approach

Having seen cultural institutions deliver events such as early openings and offer resources like social stories, we were interested in developing similar opportunities at Culzean. Our interest in Makaton came from wanting to be more inclusive in an approachable and manageable way.



Intended outcomes

- To provide Makaton training for staff.
- To improve communication between staff and visitors.
- To offer new opportunities and attract new audiences (or attract existing audiences to something more relevant to them).

Intended outputs

- Include Makaton in formal workshops.
- Use Makaton with visitors.
- Use Makaton when creating resources (such as explorer packs for those under five years old).
- Create a social story for Culzean.
- Create a National Trust trail app for people with autism.

Obstacles and issues

There are operational difficulties of offering site-wide training. Training opportunities have been provided at different times and on different days but it is difficult to offer something that suits the timetables of all staff members.

Embedding Makaton in everyday communication has proven to be a challenge as it takes practice and encouragement.

Contacting and forming relationships with individuals was difficult, looking for organisations was more straightforward: there are carer support groups, such as the Ayrshire One Stop Shop, and residential schools, such as Daldorch, who



are keen to provide support to organisations as well as families.

Actual outcomes

Our first training session took place in July 2015 with a Makaton regional tutor. Following this, two members of staff (learning officer and countryside ranger) took part in a two-day training session.

The two members of staff involved created a staff training session which happened in August and October 2016. Feedback from the August session:

"One of the first tasks we were asked to do was describe a picture to someone without either of us speaking. I struggled to describe a living room scene including a dog, fire and furniture, which my partner had to then draw. In a space of two minutes I felt isolated, frustrated and slightly ridiculous. To feel those emotions every day must be so disheartening, and that is why learning Makaton is so important. Makaton is a wonderful aid to speech for all ages and abilities."
Kirstie Bingham, Culzean Castle guide.

Relationships formed with families who are return visitors to our autism-friendly events.

New opportunities offered.

Actual outputs

Our Wee Castle Explorers workshop, which focuses on searching for animals in the castle, now includes twelve

Makaton signs, taught through song and mime.

Our early opening event for Autism Awareness Day in April 2016 saw session leaders use Makaton with participants.

Organising additional autism-friendly sessions such as Bake Your Own.

Lessons learned

On researching ways to improve Culzean's accessibility, Makaton and British Sign Language were both considered. Makaton proved to be the most accessible and easily applicable to a number of outputs.

The Autism Awareness Day early opening participants were already members. More research and time needs to be placed on getting in touch with the hard-to-reach members of the community to attract people who have never visited Culzean.

Assigning a budget is essential, as early/late openings require staff time and extra resources to ensure a good experience for participants.

Evaluation was undertaken for the Autism Awareness Day early opening but this was done by emailing participants after the event. In future we would make sure that evaluation was encouraged on-site and at the event, to enable us to collect a larger number of evaluations (only one participant replied to the email).

New audiences / autism



Access for visitors with communication difficulties and/or with autism is at the centre of this on-going work. Communication about why Makaton training and autism awareness/training is relevant to all teams is essential, meaning that staff are supported to partake in CPD sessions.

Next steps

Staff training will continue, with evaluation providing a focus for future sessions.

Steps are being taken to form a focus group to develop further sessions and to inform the Trust Trail app trail.

Front-end and formative evaluation will be sought in the development of Culzean's social story.

Relevant funding will be researched and applied for.

Elena Trimarchi
Learning officer, Culzean Castle and Country Park

Further information

For further information on the work carried out at Culzean Castle and Country Park please contact Elena Trimarchi etrimarchi@nts.org.uk

For further information on becoming Makaton Friendly please contact Sarah Drew at Sarah.Drew@makaton.org

Assessing our impact

Using museums to support teaching and learning

Summary

How do we know we are making a difference? As educators we instinctively know that we add value to school visits to the museum, through our sessions or resources but proving this can be tricky. This project aimed to demonstrate the impact the museum can have on teaching and learning.

Background

Luton Culture provides various cultural services including two museums (Wardown Park Museum and Stockwood Discovery Centre). The museum sites are very different and hold a diverse collection, allowing the learning team to provide a varied offer to schools.

The impact assessment project was part of the Heritage Lottery funded Wardown Park Museum redevelopment. Two classes of 8-9 year olds from Someries Junior School volunteered to take part. During consultation with the teachers it became clear they wanted support teaching geography skills as they weren't specialists in this area.

Challenge

1. To assess the impact museums can have on children's learning.

2. To develop new resources to support teaching geography skills.

Approach

The learning team worked alongside teachers from Someries Junior School to develop a scheme of learning (SoL) and associated resources for use in the classroom. The SoL stretched over a half-term with some lessons being taught by the class teachers while others were taught by staff from the learning team in school. The classes also came to Wardown Park Museum to complete a field trip and gather data; a day led by learning team staff.



Intended outcomes

- Understanding of the impact museums can have on learning.
- Strengthen relationship between a local school and the museum.
- Produce resources to support teaching, encourage enquiry learning and using the museum.

Intended outputs

- Creation of a SoL and accompanying resources to be published on the Luton Culture website.

Obstacles and issues

At our initial meeting with the teachers from Someries Junior School in the summer term they provided us with a list of key geography skills they wished to cover but they did not have a fully developed scheme of learning of their own. This gave us freedom in the development of the topic but also meant a lot more work was required to create a full and cohesive scheme of learning.

Time was short as the school planned to teach this topic during the autumn term therefore planning and developing time was limited to the summer holidays. We would have preferred to co-produce the SoL more closely with the teachers however due to the holidays we were not able to have any face to face meetings. It was decided that the learning team would develop the SoL and communicate with the teachers via email for comments



and suggestions. The SoL was finalised just before school started back in September and resources given to the school. Timing was tight but all parties were fully committed to the project.

Actual outcomes

- Stronger working relationship between the museum and Someries Junior School.
- A good assessment of the impact the museum had on children's learning. 90% of the children showed an improvement in their geography knowledge and skills taught by the museum.
- 83% of the children felt the museum's input had a positive impact on the topic.
- Both teachers felt more confident teaching geography as non-specialists and said they would utilise again and recommend the SoL and resource to others.

"Great resource, made it fun and more meaningful for the children, increased my confidence in teaching geography."

Nyla Sadaq, teacher

- The teachers also felt more confident in using debating in class.

Actual outputs

SoL and resources created are freely available online. The final SoL published was an improved version, adapted from the original with changes made due to feedback from both learning team and teachers.

Lessons learned

- We can, and do, have a positive impact on both teaching and learning, adding value to classes that interact with the museum.
- Time is always an issue no matter how much you plan. Teachers are busy and although they are, in the most part, keen to work with the museum it takes a lot of time to firstly engage with the school, getting teachers on board then collaboratively develop a beneficial project and implement it. Be clear about expectations from the start and what is realistic in the time scale.
- What works with one class doesn't always work with another. We found the children in the class that made the most progress were less positive about being involved with the museum.



Next steps

We are promoting the online resources to local schools through network meetings, marketing and teacher CPD as well as monitoring how many times the resources are downloaded from our website. We have also completed two more assessment projects and would like to utilise this impact assessment approach in the future when developing new sessions and resources.

Jackie Dodworth
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www.lutonculture.com/learning/schools/online-resources/the-estate-debate

Sing 500

Community celebrating 500 years of Hampton Court Palace

Summary

Sing 500 was part of the spectacular year of celebrations happening at Hampton Court Palace for the palace's 500 year anniversary in 2015. Historic Royal Palaces' learning and engagement team led this project with the specific aim of inspiring local adult audiences to creatively engage and respond to the palace's historic spaces and stories using imagination, performance and song.

Background

Historic Royal Palaces is an independent charity that looks after the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, the Banqueting House, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace and Hillsborough Castle. Our aim is to help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built.

Challenge

Sing 500 was a pilot of our new approach to community engagement using at scale working. We aimed to simultaneously work with small numbers of people through deep engagement and larger numbers of

people in a lighter way. It tested how we could stretch resources whilst still meaningfully engaging local communities with our stories and spaces in a mass way.

Approach

Sing 500 consisted of four distinct work strands that used similar source material and provided flexibility for adults to be a part of the project with varying levels of commitment in regards to time and skills development.



Intended outcomes

- Engage our local community in the palace's celebrations.
- Broaden and diversify the adult learning audience.
- Build sustainable relationships that encourage individuals to visit the palaces beyond the scope of the project.
- Pilot a new way of engaging adults through at scale working.

Intended outputs

- An opera created and performed by local communities and English Touring Opera based on the palace's history.
- Twenty local choirs performing a "celebration song" for day visitors.
- Ten introductory talks delivered to groups new to the palace.
- Online engagement with *Sing 500* through social media and video.

Obstacles and issues

It was a challenge producing a contemporary opera to a live audience in a historic space. Conservation restrictions meant we had to be resourceful and creative in regards to sound, movement, props and costumes.

There were significant staff changes in the project management team which caused confusion and misunderstanding between partners during the project's delivery phase.

Actual outcomes

Sing 500 brought a significant community dimension to Hampton Court Palace's celebration year, gaining recognition within the local area through press and advocacy, helping audiences view the palace as part of the surrounding community and a place where they belong.

We established links with 13 community groups and 20 community choirs with a strong interest in working with us in the future (100% choir leaders strongly agreed they would do so, 93% of opera participants would recommend participating in a similar project to family and friends).

Sing 500 helped us generate a new and diverse audience, engaging a total of 5,381 contacts, on and off site, and a further 143,780 online.

Sing 500 gave us the opportunity to pilot a scalable framework for community engagement. This model has been refined and since implemented on subsequent projects.

Actual outputs

- Delivered 40 workshops to 60 people to create the opera, "Under the Hammerbeam Roof" (August – November 2015).

- Produced two sold-out performances of the opera in Hampton Court Palace's Great Hall to an audience of 284 people (November 2015).
- Hosted a celebration event/film screening of the opera for participants and partners (December 2015).
- Worked with 20 choirs, consisting of 650 individuals, to deliver four performances of the "Celebration Song" in Hampton Court Palace's Base Court to audiences of roughly 3,000 people (July – November 2015).
- Delivered eight introductory talks to 106 individual, first-time palace visitors (August 2015).
- Engaged audiences online through project updates and videos.

Lessons learned

- We must continue to challenge ourselves and our audiences to explore and share the palace's stories using various creative media.
- We need to trust our partners and communities to respond to the palaces appropriately. We need to be equally, if not more creative, when working within conservation limits so that we do not dampen their enthusiasm or restrict their responses.
- It is valuable providing multiple levels of engagement (for example, one off,

short-term or long-term) for adult audiences. This enabled adults with varying work/life commitments opportunities to participate which helped diversify demographics.

- We had several key staff changes between the project planning and delivery phases. This led to some confusion between partners later on. In the future, we will have a bigger team involved in the planning process, dedicate more time to project handover and record more formalised notes in all partner discussions.

Next steps

A key output of *Sing 500* was the scalable framework for community engagement. The varied strands, taking place on-site and online using in-depth and light-touch engagement, enabled us to establish a blueprint for community engagement work at Historic Royal Palaces. This has already been implemented in our project *Gnomes Unearthed* (a community project engaging locals with the stories our gardens in 2016).

Kim Klug
Learning producer,
Historic Royal Palaces





GEM Lifetime Achievement Award: Katrina Siliprandi

GEM has given Katrina Siliprandi its Lifetime Achievement Award for her enormous contribution to museum education and GEM. For over three decades she has generously shared her skills, knowledge and experience with others, and influenced the development of museum learning, thinking and practice.

Katrina recently retired as head of museum learning at Norfolk Museums Service, where she had served for over 30 years. Her leadership was key to implementing the numerous major and fundamental changes within museum education as it moved out of the shadows to become central to the ethos and aims of museums.

In Norfolk, Katrina initially led a small department, focused on addressing an audience dominated by school groups. The department expanded considerably, and she extended its reach to a much wider audience. The philosophical approach to learning was changing dramatically – from teacher-centred to learner-centred – and Katrina played a pivotal role in implementing this in Norfolk. Her belief

in museum education as a force for good never wavered. She always fought education's corner – whether battling against cuts and charges, seeking new sources of funding or supporting educational initiatives aimed at benefiting visitors.

Katrina left Norfolk museums better equipped to survive: they had become interactive, stimulating and inclusive places to visit.

There is only room to mention a few of her many accomplishments.

Working with younger, vulnerable people

Katrina championed the potential of museums to enrich everyone's lives. Her belief that doors should be open for all was demonstrated in her innovative work with younger audiences, for whom museums had not been the most welcoming of places. An example of this was her work with vulnerable young people, especially *Looked After Children* and *Youth Offenders*. The difficult and sometimes troubled lives of these youngsters did not naturally bring them into museums, which could seem like alienating institutions from which they felt excluded. So Katrina set up

opportunities for them to experience the joys of museums in ways which related to their lives and concerns. It was a great step forward in inclusivity. But it was the transforming effect on the youngsters themselves that was of most importance to Katrina. One 16-year old in the *Looked After Children* programme demonstrated a new-found confidence when he presented his views to an audience of museum professionals at Norwich Castle Museum. He described the difference made to him through working with people such as Katrina, who gave recognition and value to his views and efforts. The opportunity to take some control over what he was doing was of special importance, in contrast to the insecurity which he felt from having to move from one foster home to another.

Similarly, Katrina's work with *Youth Offenders* opened up museums to another socially-excluded group. All agreed that this was a particularly challenging group, but it was precisely this which motivated Katrina to offer an opportunity to these young people to get involved, to begin to express themselves and to develop a sense of self-worth, so often lacking due to their past experiences. Presenting his work



at the final session, one participant highlighted how important it had been that his till-then estranged father had come to hear him and view his work; the obvious pride which his father had showed in his son's achievements had had a huge impact. Another participant, who had not attended school for over a year, came in of his own accord wanting to know whether any additional museum courses were being offered, as he very much wanted to participate.

That programmes such as these, partnering with a range of different providers, are still running, is of course testimony to Katrina's vision and insight – as well as to her sheer hard work.

The importance of displays and exhibitions

Katrina nurtured a vision of the educational potential and opportunities provided by museum displays and temporary exhibitions. She made significant contributions in this area. In the 1990s, she led the curation of two landmark shows at Norwich Castle – *Please Touch!* and *Sensations*. As the titles suggest, visitors to both of these shows were offered a tactile experience. Objects were chosen primarily for their feel

rather than for their historical significance, although of course both were of importance. This in itself was a novel concept, but the way in which the exhibitions and their supporting events programmes were devised reflected an approach which was very close to Katrina's heart. She believed in collaboration and it was through her partnership with visually-impaired groups that the content of the exhibitions was shaped. These groups worked with her from the outset – to determine the exhibitions' aims, select objects, devise labelling and suggest related events. Exhibition visitors, whether fully sighted or not, were encouraged to explore the objects through touch – and the labels and catalogue, produced by the Young Offenders unit, were in Braille. Both shows attracted and delighted visitors and were hugely popular. The *Please Touch!* exhibition was awarded a Gulbenkian Imaginative Museum Education Award in 1998 and now, more than 25 years on, it is still quoted as an example of best practice.

Regional and national impact of Katrina's work

Katrina's active involvement with GEM allowed her initiatives and ideas to influence developments well beyond the bounds of Norfolk. She played a leading role in the East of England Renaissance Learning Programme, instigating and supporting learning initiatives across the region, thereby ensuring that they became firmly embedded within museum practice. She became an examiner for the Museums Diploma and an AMA mentor. These activities took her around the country and enabled her to share good and best practice with others, especially with young professionals at the start of their museum career. She believed strongly in training and provided an inspiring role model for those newly entering the profession. As head of learning for the Norfolk Museums Service, Katrina led a county-wide team of learning officers. Her managerial style was relaxed but

effective, marked by unwavering encouragement and a great gift for friendship. She inspired her colleagues through her tireless hard work and commitment, her personal example and respect for what each could contribute. Under less effective leadership, the learning team, which was scattered across the county, might have fractured. But Katrina instilled a strong sense of cohesion in the group and enabled many diverse projects to flourish. Her stewardship remains a beacon of museum learning practice for everyone to aim for.

A lifetime of achievement

Katrina would never have boasted of any of her manifold achievements. So, it has fallen to us, her colleagues and friends, to laud her. Over her long career, she fought many battles in support of museums as institutions of learning; and she now faces an entirely different battle as she struggles with cancer. In the face of this, her fortitude and strength are humbling. Katrina has earned the respect and recognition for a professional life selflessly dedicated to transforming the lives of others through the inspiration, stimulation and pleasure which museums can give. We who have worked with her have found it a joy and a privilege.

Faye Kalloniatis with Colly Mudie and Richard Wood

If you would like to put forward a retired member of GEM for a Lifetime Achievement Award for services to museum education and/or GEM itself, then please write about 750 words in a format similar to the one above and send it with the endorsement of two other GEM members to office@gem.org.uk for consideration by the trustees.

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